

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 8282

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, PLO

SUBJECT: PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL PLANS MEETING WITHIN NEXT
TWO-FOUR MONTHS

1. SEN. HATFIELD'S ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, GERALD FRANK, GAVE EMBOFF FOLLOWING RUNDOWN OF HIS SEPARATE MEETING WITH PNC CHAIRMAN KHALID FAHUM AND PLO SPOKESMAN ABU MAYZAR NOV. 24 FAHUM STATED PNC WOULD CONVENE IN CAIRO WITHIN COMING TWO-FOUR MONTHS. ABU MAYZAR GAVE SAME TIME FRAME, ADDING THAT IN HIS VIEW MEETING WOULD BE HELD SOONER RATHER THAN LATER. FAHUM ASSERTED THAT IDEA OF FORMING PALESTINIAN GOVT-IN EXILE WAS "UNDER DISCUSSION". ASKED WHO WOULD HEAD NEW PNC OR GOVT-IN-EXILE, FAHUM SAID HE HAD SOME INTEREST HIMSELF IN JOB BUT DEFINITELY RULED OUT YASIR ARAFAT, TERMING LATTER AN "EXTREMIST WHO UNREPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIAN MAINSTREAM." FAHUM ALSO CHARACTERIZED ARAFAT AS A LEADER WHO "SHOOTS FROM THE HIP AND THRIVES ON TROUBLE." FAHUM ADDED TO HIS GENERAL INDICTMENT CRITICISM OF ARAFAT'S INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS. FAHUM SAID THAT HE AND PLO MAINSTREAM PREFERRED COORDINATION WITH SYRIA RIGHT FROM START IN LEBANON AND HAD OPPOSED ARAFAT'S "EXTREMIST ACTIVITIES" THERE.

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2. FAHUM IMPLIED THAT VISIT OF ARAFAT PREVIOUS

WEEK TO DAMASCUS HAD NOT GONE WELL. HE TOLD SOURCE THAT VISIT HAD COME AT "WRONG TIME," WHEN PALESTINIANS STILL WEAK AS RESULT OF LEBANON.

3. FAHUM STATED INITIAL GOAL OF PLO WAS CREATION OF WEST BANK STATE. IN HIS VIEW, THIS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY SECOND STAGE LINKING PALESTINIAN STATE, JORDAN, SYRIA, EGYPT AND LEBANON -- "IF LEBANESE WANT IT" -- IN CONFEDERATION. HE ASSERTED THAT FEW REFUGEES WOULD RETURN TO STATE, BUT INSTEAD WOULD ACCEPT PERMANENCE OF RESIDENCE ABROAD AS LONG AS THEY HAD "SYMBOLISM" OF THEIR OWN STATE.

4. FAHUM REVIEWED NUMBER OF FEDAYEEN REPRESENTATIVES ON PNC BUT STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF PALESTINIAN EDUCATED CLASS. HE CLAIMED THIS INCLUDED 27,000 ENGINEERS, 27,000 DOCTORS, 5,000 PROFESSORS AND 80,000 SUTDENTS.

5. FRANK DESCRIBED ABU MAYZAR AS "SABER-RATTLER" WHO TALKED OF RETURN TO TERRORISM BY PLO IF ITS AIMS FRUSTRATED. PLO SPOKESMAN SAID PLO READY TO GO TO GENEVA TO TAKE PART IN NEGOTIATIONS, HE CONCLUDED THAT "WE, NOT AMERICA, HOLD KET TO SOLUTION OF ME DISPUTE."

6. COMMENT: FAHUM HAS BEEN TALKING UP SYRO-JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN CONFEDERATION FOR SOME TIME, BUT THIS IS FIRST MENTION HE HAS MADE OF INCLUDING EGYPT IN PROPOSED UNION. THIS REFLECTS SUCCESS OF SYRO-EGYPTIAN RECONCILIATION. HIS UNFLATTERING REMARKS ABOUT ARAFAT PRESUMABLY ECHO SIMILAR EXPRESSIONS BY SENIOR SARG OFFICIALS BUT ALSO PERSONAL ANIMOSITY. WE UNDERSTAND FROM A PALESTINIAN SOURCE THAT ARAFAT UNILATERALLY REMOVED FAHUM AS PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO AFRO-SAIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE AND TO WORLD PEACE COUNCIL AND CORRESPONDINGLY REDUCED FAHUM'S OFFICE STAFF AND FINANCING. FAHUM'S STRESS ON EDUCATED CLASS OF PALESTINIANS IS CONSISTENT WITH HIS DESIRE TO FASHION COUNTER-WEIGHT TO FEDAYEEN INFLUENCE IN PLO.
MURPHY

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